

# Three New Fairview Heights Stores Opening Before Year's End

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Fairview Heights has a lot of competition attracting retail stores compared to the way southwestern Illinois was 20 or more years ago when it was the hub for such activity but the city is still holding its own as an attraction for shoppers as evidenced by the pending opening of three new businesses here before the end of 2014.

According to a report from City Administrator Jim Snider, a store called *Here Today* will be opening in the site of the former Office Depot at the far south end of Lincoln Place, phase two, along Longacre Drive and west of North Illinois Street.

Office Depot shut down late last year as a result of a corporate merger with Office Max, their local store now being located in the new City Centre development at the intersection of North Illinois Street and Lincoln Trail. Office Max was located in the south end of the previous strip there and has moved to where it is currently located adjacent to the Petco store.

This is only the second *Here Today* store in existence, the first being in Florissant, MO. The plans for *Here Today* called for it to open for business Wednesday, September 10, then a ribbon cutting is slated for Monday, September 15, at 3 p.m., according to Snider's report the Fairview Heights City Council at its meet-

ing held on Tuesday, September 2.

Here Today in Fairview Heights will have 21,000 square feet of floor space and creates jobs for between 25 and 30 employees. Its anticipated sales are \$3 million annually, according to information provided to Snider by the city's director of economic development, Mike Malloy, and its owners have made \$750,000 worth of improvements to the local location.

The aforementioned City Centre will be the site of a *Home Goods* store that is scheduled to have a grand opening on October 26. The first tenant at City Centre which is new to Fairview Heights, Home Goods will employ 42 people and occupy a space in excess of 25,000 square feet. Its projected sales of \$7 million should contribute significantly to the City of Fairview Heights retail tax revenue fund, its major source of paying for day-to-day expenses since local property owners do not pay a real estate tax into the municipality.

Another tenant at City Centre which is new to the city, the *Fresh Thyme Farmer's Market*, originally was slated to open in July then the date was pushed back to next spring but now, Snider noted, its owners are planning to open before the end of 2014.

A grocery store offering organic food, *Fresh Thyme* will employ 120 people and is estimated to generate sales of over \$16 million, according to the information provided by Mal-

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loy. The 28,000-square-foot store, located in that same center as the relocated Sports Authority, will be the second new tenant at City Centre which was not relocating from somewhere else in Fairview Heights so its opening will trigger incentive payments by the city to the Kimco Corporation of Dayton, Ohio per the terms of an agreement made with the developers of that project.

Snider also noted at last week's meeting that he had provided some photos to the City Council of a Fresh Thyme store in the

Chicago area that he went to recently while on vacation, adding that, "It's really quite a huge success."

The remaining 55,000-square-foot retail space at City Centre has been leased, according to Malloy, but the name of the tenant is yet to be announced and is expected to come forth in the near future.

Located in a completely different part of the city, construction is under way along Illinois Route 161 west of Old Lincoln Trail on the Arrowhead Building Supply business that will employ 12 people at generate sales estimated at between \$10 million and \$12 million.